

Loudly
Reciting the
Kalima etc.
while carrying the
Janaazah

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In some areas, it is a practice to loudly recite the Kalima Sharif or Naath Sharif collectively while taking the janaazah to the graveyard. I had no idea that people prohibit even this. However, when I was in Punjab, I came to know that Deobandis also label this practice an Innovation (Bidat) and Haraam. There was no intention of discussing such an open and clear topic but I was forced by my friends to include it within.

PROOF OF DOING SO

Reciting Durood, Naath, the Kalima, Tasbeeh or Tahleel, loudly or silently while carrying or walking in front of the janaazah is permissible and beneficial to the deceased and those present. This is substantiated by the Quran, Sahih Ahadith and rulings of the Jurists. The Holy Quran states, "Those who make Allah's ﷻ remembrance (Zikr) standing, sitting and while lying on their sides." - *Surah Aale-Imran, Verse 191*

Allama Ismail Haqqi ﷻ writes in the commentary of this ayat, "This ayat means that they make Allah's ﷻ Zikr at all times, in any condition or state, including whilst standing, sitting or reclining because a human is generally not free from these positions." - *Tafseer Roohul-Bayaan*

Tafseer Abus-Sa'ud states in the commentary of this verse,

والمراد تعميم الذكر للاوقات و تخصيص الاحوال المذكورة
ليس لتخصيص الذكر بها بل لانها الاحوال المعهودة التي لا
يخلو عنها الانسان.

The translation of this extract is similar to the one above of Roohul-Bayaan. Allama Fakhruddin Raazi ﷻ writes another similar explanation of the ayat,

فيها كان ذلك دليلا على كونهم مواظبين على الذكر غير قاترين عنه المراد كون الانسان دائم الذكر لربه فان الاحوال ليست الا هذه الثلاثة ثم لما وصفهم بكونهم ذاكرين.

Tafseer Kabeer

A Hadith states,

خلف الخنازة الا قول لا اله الا الله مبديا وراجعا عن ابن عمر قال لم يكن يسمع من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو يمشى.

- Imam Adi ؑ in Kaamil, Imam Zailee ؑ in Nasbur-Ra 'yah, Vol. 2, Pg. 292

Even if this Hadith is weak, it is still credible in connection to excellence of practice. Tahzeerul-Muhtaar alaa Raddil-Muhtaar states,

JANNATI KAUN?

تركه احب لانه ارتكاب باخف المضرتين كما هو القاعدة الشرعية التفكير فيقعون في كلام دنوي و ربما وقعوا في غيبه و انكار المنكر اذا قضى الى ما هو اعظم منكر اكان الصلوة على النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم و رفع اصواتهم بذلك و هم ان منعوا ابت نفوسهم عن السكوت و لكن قد اعتاد الناس كثرة.

This Ayat, its Commentaries and these Ahadith establish two things.

1. There is permission to make Allah's ؑ Zikr (remembrance) in every condition.
2. We are permitted to make it in any method, loudly or softly.

Now, to prohibit Zikr in a specific instance, a Mash'hoor Hadith would be the minimum requirement because a general ruling of the Quran (Aam) cannot be made specific by a single narration of Hadith (Hadith-e-Waahid) or the deduction (qiyaas) of a Mujtahid. Besides the recitation of the Holy Quran, the Jurists

have permitted making all other kinds of Zikr, even while in the state of menstruation (haiz) or janaabat. If a Quranic ayat is recited unintentionally in this condition, it incurs no fault. - *General books of Fiqh*

Taking the deceased to the graveyard is also a condition, and so making Zikr in it has also been allowed. The Holy Quran states, "Beware! The heart attain solace from the Zikr of Allah ﷻ. - *Surah Raad, Verse 28*

Allama Ismail Haqqi ؒ writes in the commentary of this verse, "Muslims attain serenity from the Quran and the Zikr of Allah ﷻ, which is the Isme Aazam. They also love hearing it. However, the Kuffaar gain elation from the dunya and happiness from the remembrance (zikr) of other than Allah ﷻ - *Tafseer Roohul-Bayaan*

This ayat and its commentary establish that the Zikr of Allah ﷻ is a means of happiness for Muslims and a means of sadness for the Kuffaar. Alhamdulillah, the deceased is a Muslim and so are all those who are present with the janaazah. Thus, every one of them will be satisfied with the Zikr.

Also, at that time, the deceased is undergoing the sorrow of being removed from his family and friends. The Zikr removes this. It should be bared in mind that Zikr in this ayat is absolute, irrespective of whether it is made loudly or softly. For this reason, it is permissible in any way. A restriction cannot be emplaced on it merely on your opinion or thought. Hadrat Anas ؓ reports the following Hadith,

اكثر و افي الجنازة قول لا اله الا الله.

Selection of Kanzul-Ummal, Vol. 1, Pg. 99

Rasoolullah ﷺ has said, "There are some angels of Allah ﷻ who travel the roads in search of people making Zikr. When they find such people, they proclaim to one another, "Come. Let us complete our objective." They then cover the reciters with their wings." - *Mishkaat, Kitaabud-Daawaat, Baabu Zikrullah*

Thus, if people make Zikrullah while carrying the deceased, they will travel to the graveyard under the shade of the angels' wings, allowing even the deceased to enter his grave in this condition. It should be bared in mind that here also, the Hadith is absolute (Mutlaq), i.e. it allows both loud and soft Zikr.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ has said, "When you pass by the gardens of Jannat, eat from them. The Sahaaba enquired, "What are the gardens of Jannat?" Sayyiduna Rasoolullah ﷺ, replied, "Groups of Zikr." - *Ibid*

Subhanallah! If Zikrullah is made while taking the janaazah, the deceased remains in the garden of Jannah until the grave. Nevertheless, here too is Zikr absolute (it allows both loud and soft). The Noble Messenger ﷺ further said, "Shaitaan clings to the heart of a person. When he makes the Zikr of Allah ﷻ, the wretch moves away." – *Ibid*

The above Hadith is a proof on how to save the deceased from the clutches of Shaitaan. Notice that there is also no restriction between loud or soft Zikr made here.

Until this point, only direct proofs concerning the recital of loud Zikr while walking with the janaazah have been presented. Now follows the rulings of the Jurists (Fuqahaa) regarding its permissibility:

Imam Abul-Ghani Nablusi ﷺ presents his research on this, "Some Mashaaikh have ruled making loud Zikr in front and behind the janaazah to be permissible so that encouragement in reciting the Kalima (Talqeen) is made to the deceased and those walking with, and so that love for the world and negligence, including hardness from the hearts of the negligent, is removed." - *Hadiqa Nadiya Sharah Tareeqah Muhammadia*

Imam Sha'raani ﷺ states, "Hadrat Sayyidi Ali Khawaas ﷺ used to say, "When it is known that those accompanying the janaazah persistently talk about vain things and are immersed in worldly affairs, it is appropriate to instruct them to read the Kalima Sharif, because reciting the Kalima is better than not. It is not befitting for an Aalim and Faqih to refute this except through an

explicit proof of Shariah (Nas) or the Concensus (ijmaa) of Muslims. The Shariah has given general permission to Muslims to recite the Kalima whenever they wish to. The blind heart which rejects this is surprising indeed." - *Lawaaqiul-Anwaar*

Imam-e-Rabbani, Imam Sha'raani ؒ also states, "We shall not allow our brothers a chance to refute something which Muslims formulated thinking it to be thawaab and a good act, especially if it is related to Allah ﷻ and His Rasool ﷺ, e.g. reading the Kalima while walking with the janaazah or reciting the Quran in front of the deceased, etc. He who calls this Haraam doesn't understand the Shariah." - *Uhoodul-Mashaaikh*

He further states, "The Kalima "Laa ilaaha illallaahu Muhammadur-Rasoolullah" is the best of all good deeds. Why should it then be stopped? If you pay attention to those walking with the janaazah, you will find them busy chatting about worldly things. Their hearts don't gain warning from the condition of the deceased and they are negligent to what has occurred. In fact, I have noticed that many people laugh while walking with the janaazah. When this is the state of our times, we are to act upon this (reciting the Kalima) even though it was not previously recited during this circumstance. Ruling it to be impermissible is not correct. Rather, it should be classified as permissible. This Kalima is far better than the chatter of the worldly people with the janaazah. Thus, if it is read loudly while walking with the mayyit, there is nothing wrong with this." - *Ibid*

These extracts prove that making Zikr loudly with the janaazah is permissible, especially in these times when the public laughs and talks about worldly affairs while accompanying the deceased. As a result, it is more appropriate that they are made engaged in the Zikr of Allah ﷻ because this is better than worldly chatter.

OBJECTIONS & ANSWERS

TO RECITING ZIKR WHILE CARRYING THE JANAAZAH

OBJECTION 1

The Jurists have prohibited making loud Zikr while carrying the janaazah. Alamghiri states, "It is Waajib upon

those who carry the janaazah to remain quiet. Reciting the Holy Quran and making Zikr loudly is Makrooh. If you want to make Zikrullah, do so in your heart." – *Vol 1, Kitaabul-Janaaiz, Fasl fi Hamlil-Janaazah*

Fataawa Siraaia states, "Lamenting and wailing (nauha) while following the janaazah or at the deceased's home, making a noise, reciting the Quran or making Zikr loudly is Makrooh. Saying, "Every living thing will die," while following the janaazah is an Innovation (Bidat)." – *Baabu Hamlil-Janaazah*

Durre-Mukhtaar states, "...Just as how loudly making Zikr or Qiraat following a janaazah is Makrooh." – *Vol. 1, Kitaabul-Janaaiz, Discussion on Dafn-e-Mayyit*

Allama Shaami ؒ writes under- this, "When this is the harshness pertaining to dua, what can be said about the singing that has become a practice today?" – *Raddul-Muhtaar*

Ibn Munzir ؒ has recorded the following, "The Sahaaba used to dislike making Zikr loudly in Jihad and Janaazah." -*Ashraaf*

These extracts prove that making Zikr loudly while carrying the janaazah is prohibited, especially the singing which is known in today's times as Naath recitals. These things are major sins.

Answer – These quotations can be approached with the following,

1. Does the ruling of Dislike (karaahat) which they have given regarding making loud Zikr with the janaazah refer to Tanzeehi or Tahrimi? Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi is included in permitted things. Meaning doing it is permissible, but not completing it is better.
2. Was this ruling for that specific time or for every era?
3. Is speaking absolutely prohibited or is loud Zikr or wailing (nauha) what is specifically censored?
4. Is loud Zikr ruled to be permissible for specific people or for everyone?

When these four things are decided, the ruling will become completely understandable.

- 1 The truth of the matter is that the Fuqahaa have meant Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi in their ruling of Dislike regarding this matter, hi the quoted extract of Raddul-Muhtaar by the opposition, Allama Shaami ؒ also writes, "It has been said as both Makrooh-e-Tahrimi and Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi, as per the book Bahrur-Raa'iq who has quoted the book Gaayat. Quoting Gaayat, it also states that remaining silent is better for those who go with the janaazah."

We come to know from this that remaining silent is better, and remaining silent but making loud Zikr is permissible (but not better). Discussing how to recognize Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi and Tahrimi, Allama Shaami ؒ himself writes in the definition of Makrooh,

"When the Fuqahaa give a ruling of Makrooh, it is necessary to reflect on the proof of Dislike. If its proof is of overall (zanni) prohibition, it is Makrooh-e-Tahrimi except for when there is something that stops this. If the proof is not of prohibition but rather gives the benefit of abstaining from something not necessary, it is Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi."

– *Raddul-Muhtaar, Vol. 1, Kitaabut-Tahaarat, Discussion on the meaning of Makrooh*

We know from this that if the Jurists present a prohibition of Shariah in proof of Dislike (Karaahat), Makrooh-e-Tahrimi is proven. Otherwise, it is Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi. Those Jurists who have prohibited this loud Zikr didn't present any Ayat or Hadith of prohibition. Only Shaami has presented this ayat, "Allah ؒ does not keep the beloved who go overboard." – *Surah Baqarah, Verse 190*

He has even given the following interpretation to this ayat, "Meaning, those who make dua loudly "

We can deduce that there is no explicit Hadith of prohibition for this. Thus, it is Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi, and Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi is permissible. Speaking about this

very loud Zikr with the janaazah, Imam Sha'raani ؒ states, "Imam Nawawi ؒ has preferred that it is not better to speak while walking with the janaazah." – *Uhood-e-Mashaaikh*

Sharah Muhammadiya states, "Performing loud Zikr while walking with the janaazah is Makrooh" means that it is contrary to that which is better."

In other words, doing so is not better. In any case, we shall have to accept that those Fuqahaa who have ruled this to be Makrooh mean that it is Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi.

2. This prohibition was for that era. This ruling of it being Makrooh has now changed due to the condition of people being different nowadays, because those who walked with the janaazah in those times used to remain silent and gain reflection through the janaazah. They would also share the sorrow of the bereaved family. The Shariah wants people to reflect because of the janaazah. Sayyiduna Ali ؒ states, "When you take a janaazah to the graveyard, you must bare in mind that you will be taken to it one day as well."

In this condition, saying anything is contrary to the wisdom of the situation because the mind is distracted through speaking and the heart turns its attention elsewhere. Therefore, the Jurists have said that in this state, silence should be maintained. Imam Nawawi ؒ writes,

ظاهرة وهي انه اسكن لخاطره واجمع لفكره فيما يتعلق
بالجنازة وهو المطلوب في هذا الحال والحكمة فيه.

– *Kitaabul-Azkaar, Baabu Maa Yuqaalal-Maashi ma 'al-Janaazah*

The Sahaaba state that when they used to go to the graveyard to bury someone and there was a delay in the preparation of the grave, "...they used to sit silently as if there were birds on their heads." – *Mishkaat, Baabu Dafnil-Mayyit*

When a hunter spreads his net to catch birds, he sits in

complete silence in order that the birds do not fly away because of any noise. The trend of today is that those who walk with the janaazah speak of worldly matters, joke and backbite about Muslims. If they have to remain in the graveyard for a little while, they begin their misbehavior and idle talk. So, to absorb them in the remembrance of Allah ﷻ is better than these vain acts. Thus, this is now preferred (Mustahab), i.e. all people should loudly recite the Kalima, etc. while walking with the janaazah. Rulings change due to the changing of conditions, and the Mufti who keeps himself uninformed about the state of the people of his time is ignorant. Imam Sha'raani ؒ writes, "The reason why reciting the Quran and making Zikr was not prevalent while walking with the janaazah in previous times is because, when a death used to occur, all those attending the funeral would share the grief and sorrow of it. They shared their sadness to such an extent that it was hard to differentiate between the bereaved family and the others. The people attending the janaazah paid so much attention to death that it was hard for them to even speak. Their mouths were completely sealed. If such people are found by us today, we shall not order them to recite the Quran or make Zikr." – *Uhood-e-Mashaaikh*

Subhanallah! What a clear decision! So, are people of such quality found today? Shaikh Uthman Bahairi ؒ states in the marginal notes of Sharah Iqtinaa, "To make a noise while carrying the janaazah is Makrooh, irrespective of whether the noise originates from the reciting of the Holy Quran, making Zikrullah or reciting Durood Sharif. This ruling applies to the condition of Muslims in the former times. However, in this age, there is nothing wrong in making Zikr, etc. because loud Zikr is a sign for the deceased, and to omit it is disrespectful to him. Thus, if it is made as an obligation, still too will there be nothing wrong as per the saying of Mudaabiyi." – *Vol. 2*

Imam Sha'raani ؒ states, "Saying "Laa ilaaha illallaahu Muhammadur-Rasoolullah" in front of the Janaazah is from

amongst those things which the Muslims have invented as a good act. They also say, "On the Day of Qiyaamat, this Kalima is our mediation (waseela) before Allah ﷻ," amongst other Zikrs like this. To prohibit this in these times is not necessary because people will engross themselves in worldly chatter if they do not make Zikr, due to their hearts being negligent of death. In fact, I have seen people laughing and joking while with the Janaazah." – *Uhood-e-Mashaaikh*

The condition of Imam Sha'raani's ؎ time, narrated by him in this extract, cannot come close to the deplorable state we are in today. If there is the slightest delay in burial, people naturally form their own groups and begin to laugh, joke, chat and make fitna.

The opposition label making Zikrullah with the Janaazah to be an Innovation and Haraam yet they do not stop people from speaking, explaining Islamic laws, giving verdicts of kufr and shirk or joking. They don't even demonstrate their dislike towards these actions. The Jurists have ordered absolute silence at this time as per the quoted extract of this objection. For them, making Salaam, speaking, preaching, etc. is all permissible but the Zikr of Allah ﷻ is Haraam! May Allah ﷻ grant them understanding.

Important Note - It can be said, "Islamic rulings don't ever change, so how can this change in ruling apply here?"

The answer to this is that there are rulings which change due to the alteration of circumstances surrounding them. Examples of this include taking a wage for performing namaaz, teaching the Quran, etc (which were Haraam in previous times but is permitted today). Likewise, placing sheets on the graves of the Saints is permissible due to the need of today's times, as well as making dua in the month of Ramadaan on the completion of the Holy Quran. Writing the names and the amount of Rukus and Ayats for each Surah was not prevalent in the previous times but, taking into account its benefit to the general public, it has been classified as permissible. Alamghiri states, "There is nothing wrong in writing the amount of Ayats and the names of Surahs.

Even though this is an Innovation (Bidat), it is a good one. There are many things which fall into this category. Similarly, there are many things which change due to the change in times and place."

– *Kitaabul-Karaahiyat, Baabu Aadaabil-Mus 'haf*

I have already discussed this extensively in chapters preceding this one.

Thirdly, in some places, Naath Sharif is read with the janaazah in the manner that those who listen to it know that a janaazah is passing by. Hence, they leave their homes and attend the Janaazah Salaah. The recital of Naath Sharif thus serves as a notification of this. To announce a janaazah with the intention of having people present themselves in the Janaazah Salaah and help with the burial is permissible. Discussing the burial of a deceased, Allama Haskafi ؒ writes, 'Transferring the deceased before burial, announcing the janaazah and reciting a eulogy (marsiya) to the deceased in poetry or another form is permissible." – *Durre-Mukhtaar*

Allama Shaami ؒ writes in this extract's explanation, "It is permissible for some people to inform others so that they may fulfill the rights of the deceased. Some have regarded this to be Makrooh (i.e. to announce the janaazah on pathways and roads of the marketplace). The correct ruling is that this is correct and that this kind of announcing is not Makrooh, provided the deceased is not praised exaggeratedly." – *Raddul-Muhtaar*

When proclaiming the name of the deceased or reciting his eulogy to announce the janaazah is permitted, why does reciting Naath Sharif and Kalima Tayyiba, also with the intention of announcing the janaazah, become Haraam? The latter is only an announcement of janaazah combined with the praise of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. We know from this that the loudness prohibited by the Jurists is that Zikr which has no benefit. If there is a specific benefit in it, it is permissible. This is why Allama Shaami ؒ quotes the following from the book Taa'taar Khaaniya while discussing this very topic, "However, concerning raising voices near janaazahs, there is a possibility that lamenting and wailing (nauha) is what is meant by it, or making dua for the deceased after the

namaaz has started, or exaggeratedly praising the deceased as was the habit of the people during the Period of Ignorance. On the other hand, the action of praising the deceased is not Makrooh." *-Raddul-Muhtaar*

In short, to raise voices without there being any attainable benefit is prohibited, but making beneficial Zikr is undoubtedly permissible. Its benefits in the present times have already been discussed.

Fourthly, it is the learned that are especially prohibited from making this Zikr. If the general Muslim public does it, they shouldn't be stopped from doing so. The Jurists state that the public shouldn't be stopped from making Zikr because they have no inclination towards it in the first place. So, they should be allowed to make whatever Zikr they do. Durre-Mukhtaar states, "Takbeer shouldn't be said on the path of the Eid-gaah, and Nafl Salaah must not be read at the Eid-gaah before and after the Eid Salaah. This is because the general body of Fuqahaa deems this to be Makrooh." – *Baabul-Salaatil-Eidain*

He further states, "This ruling is for the specific (learned). The general Muslim public shouldn't be stopped from these actions - not from saying Takbeer nor from reading Nafl Salaah - because their inclination towards good deeds is less." *-Ibid*

Allama Shaami ؒ writes under this, "They must not be stopped from making Takbeer, irrespective of whether it is loud or soft." – *Raddul-Muhtaar*

Also, in the discussion of loud Zikr, I have already narrated that once, Imam-e-Azam Abu Hanifa ؒ was asked, "Should we stop people from making Takbeers loudly in the marketplace?" He answered, "No." - *Shaami, Baabul-Eidain*

From all of these extracts, it is proven that on some occasions, the khawaas (specific people, i.e. the learned) are stopped from making a particular Zikr, but there is no ruling of stopping the masses from it. This is the reason why the Fuqahaa have said that Zikr shouldn't be made loudly with the janaazah. They did not say that those who make it should be stopped.

The summary of this answer is as follows,

1. This prohibition is modeled as Makrooh-e-Tanzeehi.
2. It was for the former times. In the present day, the ruling has changed because the circumstances behind them have also changed.
3. The Zikr announces the janaazah, and this has some benefit in it. Thus, it is allowed.
4. This ruling is for the specified (khawaas) exclusively. If the general body of Muslims make the Zikr of Allah ﷻ, they shouldn't be stopped from doing so.

OBJECTION 2

To make zikr loudly in front of the janaazah is likeness to Hindus when they scream "Raam is true!" You also make a noise. Likeness to the Kuffaar is impermissible, and so is this Zikr prohibited.

Answer – The Kuffar scream out the names of idols and we make the Zikr of Allah ﷻ. Where is the likeness between us? The Kuffaar sacrifice animals on the names of idols and we sacrifice animals on the name of Allah ﷻ. They go to the Ganges and bring water from it and we go to Makkah and bring back water from the well of Zum-Zum. Is this counted as similarity with them? Also, to have a likeness in that which has become the religious or cultural recognition of the Kuffaar is what is impermissible, not every action.

OBJECTION 3

To read the Kalima on the roads is disrespectful because there is filth, etc. on them. Thus, this Zikr is prohibited.

Answer – This is baseless. The Fuqahaa have explained that making Zikr while walking on the roads is permissible. Yes, to make loud Zikr in a place which is made for impure things and dirt is prohibited, e.g. the toilet or a dumpsite. Allama Shaami ﷺ writes, "There is nothing wrong in reciting the Holy Quran while walking or riding a horse, provided that the area is not made for

impure things (najaasat)." – *Raddul-Muhtaar, Discussion on Qiraat near the mayyit*

To pass a road with the Quran in hand is permitted, but to take it into the toilet is Haraam and prohibited. Also, on the day of Eidul-Adha, it is a ruling that the Takbeer of Tashreeq should be recited loudly on the way to the Eid-gaah. Durre-Mukhtaar states, "Takbeer should be said loudly on the way to the Eid-gaah." – *Baabu Salaatil-Eidain*

This is the ruling even though there are impure things, etc. on the road. Likewise, the Jurists state that making Tasbeeh and Tahleel loudly is permitted in bathrooms even though there are many impurities there. Alamghiri states, "To make Tasbeeh loudly in the bathroom is permitted." – *Kitaabul-Karaahiyat, Baabus-Salaah wat-Tasbeeh*

OBJECTION 4

To make loud Zikr before a janaazah causes womenfolk in the house and children to become afraid because they remember death and become sick as a result. Therefore, even from a medicinal point of view, this Zikr should be stopped.

Answer – The Holy Quran states, "Hearts gain satisfaction through the Zikr of Allah ﷻ." – *Surah Raad, Verse 28*

Muslims attain consolation from Zikr. Yes, the Kuffaar become scared by it. Let them remain so, because Kaafirs become afraid from even the Azaan! So, should the Azaan be stopped because of them? Anyway, where is this "medicinal proof substantiating your point of view?